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Summary

In case u didnt read the description

This book takes place after the Omen of the Stars, series

I would recommend u read that first. Because.... SPOILERS!

the story circles around Dovewing and Tigerheart. What if they were in the same clan?

If the warrior code couldn't keep them apart?

Starclan has sent the chosen cats on a journey to restore a lost, ancient clan that disappeared Long ago. Bramblestar, Mistystar, Onestar, Rowanstar and Leafstar will be sending a pawful of their cats to embark on this dangerous quest.

Dovewing is ecstatic to be chosen but feels pangs of homesickness everyday. Trying to push on And be courageous for her clans sake. She is struck with mysterious stomach spasms and a ravenous hunger that slows her down. On top of all this confusion, there is a cat in their Ranks that can't be trusted and a menacing Riverclan apprentice feeds her suspicions. She is haunted with the fear that one day, he may become like Tigerstar.

What will happen? How will Dovewing cope with her undying terror and warn the clans of the danger? And when it comes to loyalty, who will stand on her side?

"The clans are at peace with the forest, but another has been lost. The four must divide and journey beyond to restore the clan lost to time."

Character page

THUNDERCLAN

Leader: Bramblestar:Dark brown tabby tom with amber eyes.

Lionblaze:Golden tabby tom with amber eyes,

mate: Cinderheart:gray tabby she-cat.

Daughters: Hollytuft:Black she-cat.

Sorrelstripe:Dark brown she-cat.

Dovewing:pale gray she cat with blue eyes.

Sister: Ivypool:slender, silver and white, tabby she-cat with white paws, chest and green eyes.

RIVERCLAN

Troutclaw: dusky, dark gray tom.

Mallownose:light brown tabby tom.

Mintfur:cream white tabby she-cat.(this is a character i made also)

Shimmerpelt:silver she-cat.

Reedtail: black tom with green eyes.

Apprentice, Owlpaw: chestnut and brown mottled male tabby with one dark foot and yellow eyes. Hugely anoying! *my character*

Heronwing:dappled and pale ginger tom.(made up description)

WINDCLAN

Crowfeather:dark gray tom

Apprentice, Fernpaw:gray tabby she-cat

Emberfoot:gray tom with two dark paws

apprentice, smokepaw: gray tom.

Whitetail (elder):small white she-cat

Oatclaw:pale brown tabby tom

SHADOWCLAN

Tigreheart:dark brown tabby tom.

apprentice,Sleekpaw:Gray slim tom.

Dawnpelt:cream furred she-cat

Apprentice, Beepaw: pale, cream-furred ginger Tabby tom with dark bands and blue eyes.(made up description)

Applefur: pale ginger tom with green eyes.

Berryheart:White, cream she-cat with Chestnut splotches and green eyes.(made up description)

Apprentice, srtikepaw: White and tortiosshel she-cat with ginger and black mottled markings and brown eyes.(made up)

SKYCLAN

Leader: Leafstar:

Deputy:Sharpclaw:

Medicine cat: Echosong:

Apprentice medicine cat:Frecklewish:

Warriors:

Mountainshriek: Large Brown tom with dark marked face and white paws, white tuffted ears and amber eyes. (is a character I made up)

Cherrytail: red-chestnut she-cat with green eyes. (made up description)

Bouncefire: Gray tom with ginger stripes and brown eyes.(made up descrition)

Tinycloud: Small, fluffy pale tabby she-cat, green eyes.

Plumwillow: dark gray and black mottled- tom with green eyes.Apprentice:Cloudpaw.

Hawkwing:Gray, tabby tom, amber eyes.

Apprentice:Mothpaw.

Pebbleshine

Billystorm:

Egg:

Ebonyclaw:

Mintfur:

Swollowflight:

Darkclaw:

Swoopwing:

Moletail:

Coalpelt:

Ashpool:

Minnowbreeze:

Apprentices: Cloudpaw: pale, tabby tom blue eyes.

Mothpaw:

Elders: Tanglebur:

Prologue

Bramblestar twitched, as sleep washed over him.

Bramblestar expected the usual memories of Firestar and Goldenflower, his mother. Instead, darkness greeted him. Blinking in confusion, the dark, tabby tom meowed.

"Hello? Where am I?" His calls became desperate, when no answer came. "Goldenflower, Firestar, Hollyleaf?" he listened, after calling starclan. Relief surged through him, when a glowing, black cat appeared in the edge of his vision.
Bramblestar padded forward. "Thank Starclan!" he exclaimed. '*Was it Ravenpaw?'* The skittish,black apprentice had witnessed his mentor, Tigerclaw kill the Thunderclan deputy, Redtail, Tigerclaw had threatened Ravenpaw into silence. Tigerclaw, had been planning on his apprentice's demise, but Fire*paw* helped him escape. Ravenpaw fled Thunderclan, back when the clans had lived by the forest. He had lived with the plump, friendly, black and white loner, Barley, outside of clan territory. The pair had been good friends to the clans. They had given them shelter for the rescue of Windclan, the great journey and helped Graystripe find his way to the clans after the gray tabby had been captured by Twolegs while freeing the other trapped cats. Graystripe was Firestar's best friend. He had retired and would one day join Firestar again. Ravenpaw had given one of Bramblestar's nine lives, so that meant he was dead.

Bramblestar hoped it wasn't Scourge! The evil Bloodclan leader had tried to take over the forest.Tigerstar had brought them, to try to force the clans to join shadowclan. Scourge had killed the mighty leader with one paw swipe! Scourge had been a small black cat with a white paw and claws and a collar studded with teeth! That had taken all 9 lives away at once. Scourge had killed whitestorm and taken away firestar's first life, Firstar had killed him and they had won.

Bramblestar came closer to to touch noses. Then, he pulled back. This cat was unfamiliar to him. "Excuse me?" he paused cautiously, taking a suspicious sniff. "I couldn't help but notice you." he dipped his head, with his authority of a leader. Then he cocked his head with interest.

"Who *are* you?" He stopped, as a familiar scent washed over him from behind and his eyes watered. *Firestar!* Bitter-sweet memories filled him, as he was reminded again of the brave, clever leader, and his former mentor. "F...f..f.firestar." He choked out, struggling to control his own voice.

The flame- colored pelt of his old mentor and leader was unmistakable, glowing like a sun in the darkness. Firestar's eyes gleamed with pride. Bramblestar bowed lower.

Firestar returned the favor, and spoke. "Bramblestar, you have turned into a fine leader and I would be proud to call you kin." Bramblestar glowed with warmth, too shaken to reply. Firestar continued

"This is Skywatcher." he dipped his head towards the black and white, elderly male that had appeared first.

"He was the first cat of Skyclan that we found." Suddenly, the old cat's blue eyes seemed more foreign and powerful. He had heard of the forgotten clan, driven out by its neighbors. Firstar had been on a quest and restored the fifth clan. He stared in awe at the stranger known as Skywatcher.

Skywatcher dipped his head, black pelt full of stars, making his white-patched underbelly and star- shape on head seem to glow. "Greetings Bramblestar." Skywatcher spoke at last. Respect glowed in his blue eyes as he continued. "I have heard much about you." Skywatcher rumbled and dipped his head. "It is an honor to finally meet the one of legend."

Bramblestar's amber eyes widened. "L...l...l..legend?" he stammered, shocked. Skywatcher seemed amused. "Of course, haven't you..." Skywatcher began and stopped. He stepped aside and called. A small kit padded out of the shadows, his white fur shone in the

dark. The kit examined Bramblestar for a moment. And finely meowed. "I am Snowkit." he squeaked. The name seemed familiar to him but he didn't remember how. "I don't know you so you weren't born. When i was just a deaf kit, of Speckletail, a hawk took me while i was playing. I couldn't hear it coming. Brackenfur tried to save me, but couldn't." I was killed when Firestar was a warrior.

Firestar dipped his head. "Thank you for the introduction Snowkit." Skywatcher stepped forward. "Now, you think you can tell him the legends of Bramblestar?" the kit's blue eyes lit up with excitement as he recited:

"There will be one, son of Tigerstar and brother of evil, when the fire is threatened, he will slay the hawk with ice in his heart. And before all is peaceful blood will spill blood and the lake will run red." he finished.
Snowkit cocked his head. " who doesn't know the legend of Bramblestar? Who are you?" Bramblestar dipped his head. "I am Bramblestar, leader of Thunderclan and it gives me great honor to know you have faith in me."

The kit's eyes went wide and he let out an excited squeal. "Oh boy, Oh boy! Wait till i tell Speckletail!"

Just then, a pale she-cat with a long, speckled tail padded out of the shadows. "My, Snowkit!" she scolded gently. "Don't you dare wander off like that again! You scared me half to death!" she began covering her tiny son with vigorous licks. Snowkit wiggled out of her grip and shook his fur. "But..but mama!" his whiskers twitched excitedly. "I met the great Bramblestar! And then there was the great Firestar and a skyclan cat named Skywatcher! And and...and they had me recite the legends of Bramblestar and then he said. *I am Bramblestar, leader of Thunderclan and it brings me great honor that you have faith in me."* Snowkit puffed out his chest and said it in the deepest voice he could. The young tom was doing an impression of Bramblestar!

Speckletail shook her head. " now now," she said with a marrow of amusement. " now is not the time for stories, and look at your filthy pelt!" Snowkit shook his head. "No mama! It's true, it's not a story! I realy... it really did happen i promise!"

Speckletail didn't look convinced. "Really?" she said with a patronizing tone. Snowkit looked crestfallen. " mama! It's true! Just ask Skywatcher...or..or Firestar.....or...or...or...um..Bramblestar, they'll tell you." Speckletail scratched her ear. "And how can i ask them, now?" she sounded like an elder complaining about the *impossible* task of crossing a river.

Snowkit gestured his fluffy tail towards the cats in the clearing, that Speckletail had been to focused on her kit to notice.

Speckletail gaze followed her son's tail was pointing to and gasped in shock. "Bramble*star?"* she ran to the clearing. I can't believe it! So, Your leader now? I thought it was a legend!"

Bramblestar dipped his head, feeling a little uncomfortable. "No, I am not a legend, i am Firestar's successor, Bramblestar now." Bramblestar continued, tilting his head to Snowkit. " That's a fine son you got there, it was too bad i wasn't born then. I would have loved to mentor Snowkit." Speckletail gazed at him in astonishment. "Th..th...th..th...th..thank you...B...b..b...Brambles..s..s..star." She exclaimed.

Before Bramblestar could reply, Skywatcher strutted forward. "Enough, this is not a reunion! We have brought him here for a reason! Not to chat about old days like a bunch of elders!" his attitude reminded Bramblestar of the chatty elder Purdy that Thunderclan had brought into the clan as an old lonely loner. They had owed him that much, the touchy, elderly tom had helped them through twoleg place in the great journey, and helped them find Sol.

Course Bramblestar didn't have the courage to say so out loud!

Speckletail reluctantly gathered up Snowkit with a last glance at Bramblestar. "Come on Snowkit, we better go home." Snowkit followed, with a little bounce, he squealed. "Wait till I tell Mosskit, Pebblekit, and Larkkit and Hollykit and Juniper kit!" Speckletail purred with pride. "Oh, and don't forget Badgerfang and mousefur and whitestorm and.." Speckletail interrupted. "OH and don't forget to tell Yellowfang too!" she teased. Snowkit leaped back. "No way! She's too scary! And cranky, and *Ol-l-l-ld.*" Speckletail let out a

marrow of amusement." don't tell mousefur that being old makes her scary! Or you might just escape with both your ears!" she exclaimed. Snowkit swatted her playfully. She's just a..." he paused. "What's the word...?" Speckletail answered for him. "A grumpy ol badger?" she suggested with a laugh. Snowkit's gaze cleared and he gave a nodd. "Exactly." Snowkit wrinkled his nose and added. "And she smells weird!" he complained. Speckletail stopped and cuffed him gently. "Well what do you expect! She's Thunderclan *and* Shadowclan!" they disappeared out of sight.

Skywatcher's gaze grew urgent. "Hurry! The sun will be out soon, we've got to tell him before he wakes up!" he urged. Firestar nodded and they spoke in unison, a prophecy...

"The clans are at peace with the forest, but another has been lost. The four must divide and journey beyond to restore the clans lost to time forever."

They were starting to Fade. "Send only those whos hearts are true." then they disapeared completely and Bramblestar woke up.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1

Dovewing panted, struggling to keep up. She had been shocked when Bramblestar had chosen her to leave the clans forever. She trembled. *Did Bramblestar think* she *would guide the clans with her powers?* She didn't have any more powers! She shook off the thought and trotted forward. She stopped, willing Tigerheart to be there, they would be able to stay together! That is, only if he chose to join her new clan. Dovewing twitched her ear dismissively. *Of course Tigerheart would join her!* Her paws fizzed with excitement. Deep in thought, she almost stepped on Holly Tuft's trailing tail. Dovewing stopped just in time, to come crashing into Holly Tuft's father and Dovewing's old mentor, Lionblaze. Lionblaze turned his golden head. "Honestly Dovewing! Can't you put one paw in front of the other without tripping over some cat?" he snorted with exasperation. Dovewing scuffed the dirt with her soft-gray paws. "Sorry." she mumbled. Though, despite the scolding, her paws still carried a small bounce in her step. Dovewing cocked her head. *Wait a minute?...* She took care to study who was with her. Holly Tuft, Cinderheart, Lionblaze and herself. That's weird?

That confirmed her theory. All of the cats picked for the new clans in Thunderclan were all *kin!* Firestar connected them. Firestar's daughter, Leafpool had had Jayfeather and Lionblaze, as well as their dead sister, Hollyleaf. Lionblaze mated with Cinderheart and had Holly Tuft, Fernsong and Sorrel Stripe. Firestar's sister, Princess had given up her first kit to Thunderclan, back in the forest, Cloudtail. Cloudtail had whitewing who mated Birchfall and had had her and Ivypool.

Was that just a coincidence? She stumbled and blinked,realizing she had fallen behind and raced forward to catch up, dodging debris and brambles, swiftly.

When they had reached the top of the slope that dropped down to

the river/ stream that bordered Riverclan and Thunderclan. Waiting for them was: Mallowfur, owlpaw, Reedtail and Mintfur, with Troutclaw in the lead. Troutclaw lead his group up the slope to meet the Thunderclan cats. Owlpaw broke ranks and strutted up to Dovewing. The brown apprentice sniffed. Dovewing fought the urge to gag, as his fishy breath wafted over her, making her nostrils flare. "What took you so long?" he snapped at her, demandingly. *As if he holds authority over me!*

Dovewing met the pushy apprentice's amber stare with an equally hostile blue one. "Why do you need to know?" she demanded, thrusting her muzzle forward. Owlpaw seemed undaunted, puffing out his chest in satisfaction. "*Mouseheart*!" he taunted. "Does Thunderclan need she-cats to protect them now?" He pressed.

Dovewing trembled, sinking her claws in the ground, to avoid swiping the stupid apprentice's nose. It took all of her effort to keep her fur flat. Forcing anger out of her voice she replied stiffly. "Oh? I didn't know Riverclan had something against she-cats. How do you get your kits? Search the seaweed?" Owlpaw lifted his chin indignantly. "Well, we..." Dovewing didn't let him finish. "All of a sudden she-cats are weak huh? Well, try telling Mistystar she's too weak to lead." she meowed contemptuously. She narrowed her eyes. "I dare you." Owlpaw looked uneasy and his voice shook."well i'm not going to get the chance now, am I." he pointed out. "Geez! How does Thunderclan win its battles? If we invaded, would you talk me to death?" He flicked his tail at her muzzle pointedly. "Oh, and i think you're ready to join the elders. Just look how much gray hairs you have!" A growl rumbled in Dovewing's throat. How *dare* he say that having a pale-gray pelt made her old! What was up with this apprentice! What, was he *trying* to lose his ears? "Back off." she warned in a low voice. "Go tease fish." Owlpaw didn't budge. He licked a paw cooly. "Oh? And if I don't, will you ***eat*** me?" he mocked. Without hesitation, Dovewing dove at the apprentice, claws sheathed, and shoved him over to his clanmates. With a mischievous glint in her eye, Dovewing meowed. "Keep pushing me and you'll find out." she offered cheekily. "Come to think of it, I am in the mood for a nice, *Plump,* apprentice." she bared her teeth in mock threat. Owlpaw was offended. "*Plump?"* He echoed indignantly. "Who are you calling *Plu..."* He started. Lionblaze

interrupted. "*Enough*!" he demanded. "Dovewing, *Ignore* him." Dovewing dipped her head, with exaggerated grace, trying to show up Owlpaw. "As you wish, Lionblaze." she replied. Owlpaw flicked his tail contemtiously, baring his teeth. "Yah, Dovewing." he mimicked, "*Ignore* me!" he mocked. Dovewing gritted her teeth, seething with anger. Dovewing spat through her teeth. "You think you're *so*..." her words were cut off, as Cinderheart pushed her way in front. "How *dare* you insult my clanmate like that! She snapped. "Owlpaw, does Riverclan take pride in picking fights?" She asked in mock interest. "And *you!"* she swung her gray head to meet Reedtail's gaze, he was Owl Paws mentor. "Can't Riverclan control it's... *Apprentices?"* She challenged. The black tom dipped his head. "Owlpaw!" he exclaimed. "I don't play this card very often, but Thunderclan is right. How dare you disgrace Riverclan in front of our traveling companions! Come here this instant!" Owlpaw sniffed. "*Companions?*" he looked pointedly at Dovewing with a nod. He wrinkled his nose. "I'm not traveling with *her*." He growled in disgust. "She smells *weird*!" Dovewing gaped, how stupid could this apprentice be? Before Dovewing could fire up a stinging retort, Holly Tuft came to her side. " So do you *, Fish- breath!"* Owlpaw stiffened, every cat knew that Riverclan hated that insult. Owlpaw snareled. "You...you Fish-hearts!" he flashed at them. "*Us?*" Dovewing sneered. "Do you see Thunderclan Sprouting fins and playing with water?" Owlpaw was hot with anger. "Well, your name *is Dovewing.* I don't want you here, so, go on sprout wings, and fly home little birdie!" he prompted, in a little voice. "Go on, flap for me birdie, flap for me! Go join the Sparrows!" *What a dumb retort!* Dovewing shot out a paw and caught him on the nose, sending Owlpaw spinning back to his clanmates.

Trout Claw looked furious. "Owlpaw." he screeched. "*Now!"* with a stomp, Owlpaw sulked back to Trout Claw, who gave his ears a hard cuff that made him stagger. "Fine, but Thunderclan are just cowards...they." Owlpaw didn't finish. Trout Claw cuffed him harder. Milkfur sniffed. "Shut Up!"

Her ears were flat with embarrassment.

"We're wasting daylight." Lionblaze looked pointedly at the sky.

Owlpaw shook his head in reply."sorry, we are *still* waiting for the

mud-cats and rabbit-kitties!" he complained. "Wow!" milkfur came up to him with a glare. "You really don't know when to shut your big mouth!" she flicked her tail dismissively. Owlpaw leaped onto the cream-colored she-cat. Milkfur squealed in surprise, as her own clanmate knocked her over. He thrust his muzzle into her face. "No, *you* shut up! Since when did Trout Claw make you leader over everyone?" he demanded. Dovewing flinched, as Milkfur let out a yowl. He was hurting her! She caught a glimpse of unsheathed claws. "Owlpaw!" Dovewing gasped. "Stop!" Owlpaw slashed a claw across Milkfur nose, making her wince. Then he got up, shook his pelt and gave her a stare that chilled her to the bone. This cat looked like Tigerstar! She shivered, remembering the dark murderous tom. Tigerstar had been willing to *kill* for power! Even elders and kits! But Owlpaw was just bad mannered. *Surely* with more training he'd get better? Milkfur got up. "You *scratched* me!" she gasped. Owlpaw flexed his claws threateningly, with the same cruel smile she'd seen on Tigerstar, in the battle with the dark forest. Dovewing swallowed as he replied."All go for the stomach next time you talk to me like that!" he retorted. Milkfur cringed and backed away with fear in her eyes.

Dovewing swallowed, a worm of fear nagging her belly. Was Owlpaw the new Tigerstar? Stifling a shiver, Dovewing was lost in thought.

A yowl startled her and she blinked, to see the Windclan patrol appearing over the hill. Squinting against the sun, she tried to make out the distinct shapes. Maybe she would recognize one.

The black cat at the head of his patrol, who Dovewing recognized at once. And she groaned inwardly. *Crowfeather!* Why in the name of Starclan had Riverclan and Windclan chosen their most annoying, or grumpy clanmates? Crowfeather was almost as cranky as Jayfeather! She watched the Windclan tom's lithe, sleek shape bounding down the grassy, green slope. The sun glinted off his freshly groomed pelt, making her flinch as it made contact with Dovewing's eyes.Dovewing blinked, awed at the speed and flawless trot.

Though, she hated to admit, he did look kind of graceful, pelting down the hills at full speed, tail streaming out behind him. Behind

him, his patrol followed, always somehow managing to keep in their patrol leader's pace. Now that the sun had gone behind a small cloud, Dovewing could name the cats who charged downward with pride.

Crowfeather's gray tabby apprentice, Fernpaw, trailed just at her mentor's heels.

Farther behind her were the small forms of her clanmates. Having been to gatherings, Dovewing searched her memories and recognized Emberfoot and his apprentice, Smokepaw. The next cat she recognized made her feel warm. Thunderclan's old friend, Whitetail, the elder had...

Dovewing stopped dead. *Elder?* She gulped, would the frail she-cat survive the journey? Though, Dovewing didn't blame Onestar, Windclan's leader, since, knowing elders, and Whitetail's determined spirit. Whitetail had probably insisted on going, and like purdy and his obsession of stories, Dovewing knew, When '*she*' has got her mind set on something, there is no talking an old cat out of it! She remembered her mother, Whitewing, telling her this when she was a kit.

Out of the corner of her eye, she realized another cat was with the Windclan. A lithe, braken- colored*, tom*, by the looks of it. She narrowed her eyes with interest, realizing she had never seen him before! *Wow! At least somthing interesting!* She thought.

Delving deeper into it more, she turned the thought over in her mind, as if a precious piece of prey. Would the newcomer be rude and badmannered, like Owlpaw. *Or Crowfeather!* She thought silently. Or would he be more bold and proud, like Troutclaw and Mallowfur, or Heronwing. Or, defensive and loyal, like Hollytuft and Cinderheart. Or maybe, more shy and indignant, like Milkfur or.. She stopped herself, realization at her true nature swept over her. *Or, like, me...* was she really shy and indignant? It was Owlpaw who had pulled her whiskers! He was the annoying furball who purposfully pushed her to her last nerve. It wasn't Dovewing! Owlpaw...

Dovewing's blue eyes widened with dismay, as she realized that she

wasn't taking any responsibility for her actions. Owlpaw was anoying, but...it was her own choice to respond to the stupid lump of fur!

Her father's words echoed in her mind, of long ago and, she couldn't hold back the memories whenever they rushed through her mind, like the waves of the Sun-drown place. And the memory came, as clear as if she were re- living it....

Dovewing bowed her head in shame, as her father paced her, cream-brown fur brushing the floor. Dovewing shifted her pws uncomfortably, not daring to meet her father's blue gaze. Was he mad? "I'm s...s....s...sorry!" she exclaimed. Lashing her dove-gray tail indignantly, she continued, eyes blazing. "It wasn't my *fault! Ivykit knew about it! Ivykit shouldn't have tricked me like that!" Birchfall met her stare without hesitation."Oh? and you thought it would be fun to play catch with a dead mouse?" her father snorted. Dovewing's fur fluffed up indignantly. "We were just playing a game!" she objected hotly.* Why did her father have to act like she had done something terrible! Birchfall was acting like she had put fire ants in the elder's bedding! They hadn't done any harm, they were just trying to having fun! *"We weren't doing any harm..." she dared to continue. "We were just having fun!" she lifted her chin defiantly. "So what's wrong with that?" she challenged, carfuly.*

Birchfall's ice blue eyes blazed, as he rounded on his daughter. "What's Wrong *with it, is that that was our last decent piece of fresh kill!" he retorted. Dovewing backed up, nervous at the tension in the air. She remembered Sandstorm's comforting words. "* If some cat's are more touchy this moon, the Leaf-bare chill has gotten them on edge, but don't you worry, when Greenleaf returns, so will the clan's spirits, Oh, and you would be smart to try not to run into Jayfeather! at Thornclaw's reaction, Starclan *knows* what kind of mood the weather's got that cranky old tom!" *Dovewing stifled a shiver and hoped she was right! Birchfall took a deep breath before turning back to Dovewing. "Look." his fur flattening, he added. "I'm sorry i snapped, It's just all this stress of Leafbare and taking care of the clan, it's, well, it's kinda got me a little on edge." he admitted. Dovewing's whiskers twitched. So Sandstorm was, right! Birchfall continued. "It's just that Mousefur was* pretty *upset with the soggy thrush." his whiskers twitched,*

glint of amusment in his eyes. Dovewing loved her father's nature and personality! Unlike other serious fathers, Birchfall was willing to get down on the dirt, if it made his kits happy, he and Lionblaze, and Firestar and Graystripe, knew how to have fun! Birchfall looked at his daughter lovingly, and nuzzled Dovewing's cheek with a pur rumbleing in their throats. "But remember..." her father ended. "It is important to take respnsiblility for your actions, i don't want you blaming other cats. And no more, 'Ivykit made me do this, and Ivykit made me do that...,' no cat can actually *make* you do anything, you have control over your own actions. And though i will talk to Ivykit, you must remember..." he leaned closer to her. " a true warrior takes responsibility for her own actions, don't forget that, it's what an honest warrior does." he rested his soft, brown tailtip on her gray shoulder. Dovewing couldn't bite back a purr, and snuggled up closer to her father. "I won't." she promised, then ,realizing her mistake, she quickly added. "I mean, i will," her pelt flushed with embarassment, under her fluffy coat. "I won't forget, i'll remember." Birchfall licked the fur between Dovewing's ears, his gaze softened. "I know will Dovekit, and just remember, i'll always be proud of you no matter what, my precious daughter. Dovewing eurupted into a loud pur that seemed to fill her whole world, as she nuzzled affectionately. She closed her eyes, not realizing that she was awake, quite yet. "Daddy, Daddy..." she mumbled drowsily, laying down in a fluffy pool of fur.

Suddenly, Lionblaze's scent washed over her. Dovewing's ears burned. *No, i didn't, please! No no no, tell me i didn"t!* She wimpered inwardly. The clans wouldn't forget this one! *Oh boy!*

Dovewing blinked her eyes open in surprise, just in time to see Lionblaze leap backward, in bewilderment. "Wh... whoooo ho ho ho!" he exclaimed, his golden fur fluffed up in surprise.

His gaze sparkled with amuzment, and his whiskers twitched, along with his large tail-tip.

Cinderheart leaned over. "Looks like Dovewing's checking in early!" Lionblaze's mate gave a mrrrow of amusment. Dovewing's ears flattened with shame. How did she let herself be embarassed in front of the other clans! Her skin felt hot and she ducked, when Lionblaze leaned over in her ear. "Yes! Let's not be *too* hasty!"

Dovewing shuffled her paws in the dirt. "You've got your whole life ahead of you yet!" Her former mentor teased gently, nudging her lightly. Dovewing swatted him playfully, her eyes wide. "Were *kin*! She exclaimed, Lionblaze doged her blows, when the patrol caught up to them. Instantly, Dovewing was drawn back to the new Windclan cat. For some strange reason, there was familiar about him that she couldn't explain,as if Dovewing had seen him somewhere, but couldn't remember where. *Perhaps i met him at a gathering.* She thought. Then, the braken-colored tom's eyes met hers, and she was frozen with shock. "Oatkit?" she gasped in disbelief. How could this be the small, soaking scrap of fur that had fallen in the small stream, in the battle of the dark forest. Dovewing had rescued him. Dovewing had known that he would be older now,But seeing his age was hard to believe that this was the half-drowned runt who she saved. Oatkit dipped his head. "Dovewing!" his eyes were full of gratitude. "Thanks for saving me! I'm Oat*claw* by the way." he added.

Dovewing fizzed with excitment, now they would pick up Shadowclan.

*Oh Starclan!*She silently begged. *Please let Tigreheart be there!* Hope in her heart.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2

Dovewing almost bounced like a kit. Finely! It was time to find out if Tigreheart had come or not. Still half in a daze, Dovewing leaped the small stream. She over-shot it and landed, skidding to a halt on the other side. She wrinkled her nose as the strong stench of Shadowclan blasted her. Shaking her head to clear it, dovewing stepped back. Her paws slipped out from under her, sliding smoothly over a small hill/mound, she landed with a splash, deeper into the mud.

Dovewing heard Owlpaw snicker. Ears burning, she struggled to her paws. Dovewing attempted to lift her forepaw up, to walk, but to no avail. Dovewing thrashed about, trying to free herself, splattering her coat with mud. She was stuck! Panicking, she tried to leap, but failed, only to find her face rubbed in the mud. With a small noise of frusturation, Dovewing jerked sideways to turn, but her paws wouldn't budge. *Thanks alot!* Dovewing thought crossly. *Big fur coat!* She shivered, as the mud soaked to her skin. Wieghed down by her thick coat, which wasn't gray anymore, she let herself collapse, her head drooped, smearing her cheek with more mud. Dovewing heaved a sigh. Was this the end? Would she die here? Stuck in the mud, while the others journeyed, Starclan knows where, and perhaps Tigreheart with them... Pangs of regret claimed her body, and she almost howled her grief aloud. She wished Ivypool were here. Her sister would understand, she always did. But she knew that they would never see their clanmates again.

She wimpered, she would never get to train an apprentice, or see the new clans be built, or see her sister again, or have kits. She gave a shudder and blacked out as saddness overtook her.

Dovewing woke with a start, at the sound of voices. Shapes moved about, in her foggy, blurry vison, though she couldn't make out who they were. *Was this Starclan?* Dovewing strained her ears, since she

couldn't feel her legs anymore.

A brown, tabby shape aproached the shore. "Tigreheart?" she whispered. As her vison cleared, she found herself staring into the Shadowclan tom's amber eyes. When he met her eyes, he let out a gasp, aperantly the mud disguised her, but he recognized her deep blue eyes.. "Dovewing?" Tigreheart quickly snatched her scruff and hauled her out of the mud, to safety. Tigreheart shook his fur. "Great Starclan that's cold!" he exclaimed, when the wind touched his soaked skin. Dovewing collapsed, to exshausted to move, but hope filled her heart. *Was Tigreheart coming too?* Dovewing gave a long, happy sigh. This was it. Her dream had finely come true. Dovewing shivered with cold, as the sun disapeared behind the marshy slopes. All around her, she could hear the others settling down for the night. Dovewing burned with shame.*The journey was on hold because of me?* Dovewing felt sharp with guilt. She didn't want to take advantage of their honerable nature! "Goodnigt." she heard Dawnpelt's voice. "Goodnight." Mintfur answered her. Fernpaw echoed it to Hollytuft, who echoed it to crowfeather, who echoed it to Strikepaw, who echoed to Lionblaze and Cinderheart. Dovewing was pleased that the clans were getting along. Still shivering, Dovewing realized that some cat had tucked moss underneath her. It smelled like Tigreheart. Snuggling deeper into the nest, Dovewing's heart skipped a beat, when some moss rustled beside her and Tigreheart's sweet scent bathed her tongue. She breathed deeply and a quiet purr rumbled in her throat. "Tigreheart!" she whispered. Tigreheart's muzzle brushed her cheek. "Yes?" he answered gently. Dovewing swallowed back the emotion that rose in her throat, and she replied, slowly, remembering to stay quiet. "T..t..t..tigreh...h..heart?" Tigreheart purred quietly. "I'm hear Dovewing." he reasured her, pressing his soft flank against her. Dovewing finely found her voice. You *are* coming with us?" she puased."*aren't* you?" She asked. Tigreheart lapped her ear fur with his tongue. "Of course, i wouldn't miss this for anything." he curled around her and the chill vanished completely, shielded from the cold. Her heart swelled with gratitude, and she let her head drop with a sigh of relief. She let her secret mate sooth her with gentle lapping stroked, as he groomed the mud from her fur. Hearing the sound of their blended purs, Dovewing drifted into sleep.

Chapter 3

chapter 3

Dovewing panted, she was fit to travel and they were crossing a flat, dirt plain. It was strange to Dovewing. Feeling uneasy, she leaned over to Whitetail, the Windclan elder might have a clue. "hay, " she asked her. "What is this place?" Dovewing gradually fell back a pace. Whitetail shrugged. "Maybe it's a twoleg thing." Dovewing tilted her head. "A *twoleg* thing?" how in Starclan could this be made by twolegs? Whitetail answered. "Of course, like those nests, and your hollow." she explained gently. Dovewing nodded slowly, begining to understand. "Oh*, right!"* she hurried to fall into place with Tigreheart again. "Oh that is just a dry plain, we have some in our territory. The river makes it dry. Floods happen the most in Greenleaf, when the sun is hot." he continued, still walking. " The sun bakes the ground and hardens the soil to as hard as rock, that is hard on the ground, and it begins to crack all over. When it rains, the ground is too solid to soak it in, and the water has nowhere else to go, so it rushes over the ground, as if it was stone underpaw!" he shivered. "Leafbare is hard on the dry- plains," he paused, "that's what Shadowclan calls them." he explained. Dovewing nodded, full of interest, as Tigreheart continued. "Every greenleaf, I know that Thunderclan views rain as a *blessing.*." Dovwing bristled, ready to defend her old clan, but Tigreheart added."i know that the forest soaks up all the water, and your camp is far from the lake, so you have no reason to." his words soothed Dovewing. *He really understands!*Dovewing's heart sang in her chest. *"Riverclan and Shadowclan have the worst,* when it rains, though." he added. " Every Shadowclan cat fears the Flood- season, or Greenleaf, and we have to move up to higher grounds. Shadowclan is not weak." he seemed determined to prove that his clan could still survive.

Dovewing purred, tail curling with amusement. "Are you always like this?" she teased, giving her secret mate a nudge. Tigreheart

didn't even seem affended, in fact, a glint of laughter shone in his amber eyes. "No." Tigreheart answered teasingly. "I'm usualy not this fat and grumpy!" his whiskers twitched. Dovewing gave a mrrow of amusment. "Ivypool says *i'm* usualy fat and grumpy." she offered. Lionblaze leaned over. "Like Jayfeather!" he exclaimed. A wave of amusment passed through the group. Even Owlpaw seemed to be laughing. But was it good humoredly, or mocking? Dovewing narrowed her eyes. Were all Riverclan cats this unpredictable? To her surprise, Owlpaw trotted up. "Well, he *is* blind."he pointed out." any cat would be grumpy if they couldn't see." he argued stiffly. Dovewing blinked in surprise. Was Owlpaw *defending* Jayfeather? Owlpaw continued. "Plus, I like Jayfeather, he's determined and loyal..." he twitched his whiskers puffing out his chest." like me!"

Mintfur leaned over and whispered to Holllytuft, to quiet for Owlpaw to hear. "Yah, and a nosy pain in the tail, just like you!" she mrrrrowed. Hollytuft murmured agreement.

Then, they continued, quieter, accasionaly glancing back at her and Tigreheart, heads close together. *Was that amusment in their tones?* Dovewing flattened her ears, embarassment boubling inside her. *What are they saying about us!* She thought selfconsciously, ducking to avoid a large branch. The tree looked dead, or close to death. Dovewing strained to hear what they were saying, but they were too quiet for her to make out much, except.. *.Fat...mother... of...Tigreheart.... killed....by.....Borage.....needs.....Dovewing's....beautifull..... frog...hansome....L...birds....to...travel....and....burst...happy....blueberries...and.. and mrrows of agreement)* and so on. Dovewing jerked her head in confusion.

As far as Dovewing had heard, they had said... *'The Fat mother of Tigreheart, killed by Borage, needs Dovewing's beautifull frog. Hansome Lbirds to travel and burst happy blueberries and hurting grass?* She shook her head. That wasn't it. It didn't even make sense! Head spinnng in confusion, Dovewing stumbled, stabbing pain in her stomache. *Must have hit a rock.* She guessed, praying it was true. She didn't want anything to prevent her from traveling. Dovewing got to her paws, with a wince. Somthing thumped against her ribs, along with her heart. Was it worms? Dovewing gasped with

egshaustion.as another spasm gripped her. Instantly, Tigreheart was at her side. "Are you okay?" he whispered, concern in his amber gaze. Dovewing forced her voice not to quaver. "Yes," she shrugged." must have been somthing i ate." she answered. Lionblaze answered. "We *havent* eaten, maybe we're hungry, lets hunt."

owlpaw grimaced. "What *is* there to hunt in this barren place!"he sniffed.

"If we don't eat, i might be feeling for a sertain, *dove!"* he glanced at Dovewing, she rolled her eyes. *Mousebrain! Suddenly she gasped, with pain, it felt as if tiny paws were pummleing inside of her stuomache.* She winced. *Pretty bad hunger pains then!*

Dovewing struggled to her paws. Tigreheart nudged her down again. "No." he meowed. "You, rest, i'll catch somthing for us." before she could pretest, Tigreheart touched his nose to her ear and left. Dovewing slumped back down again, relieved to finely be at rest. Egshausted, Dovewing slid into sleep.

"Wake up." it felt like she had just closed her eyes, before Tigreheart nudged her awake. The pleasant aroma of mouse washed over her. Her mouth watered. Tigreheart nodded encouragingly. " go on, it's yours." Dovewing hesitated. "What about you?" Tigreheart dipped his head. "Oh, i got somthing too." he held out a shrew hooked on a claw. Dovewing reluctantly took a bite, she realized how starving she was! She tore into the prey, without hesitation. When she was done, Dovewing licked her lips. That was it? But she was *still hungrey!* Her belly growled loudly. Lionblaze looked up from his crow in surprise. "Wow, Dovewing, your *still* hungry?" he exclaimed in disbelief. His muscles tensed and he repleid under his breath, only Dovewing could hear him. "The only time any cat has been like this was when..." his amber eyes widdened. "Was when...Cinderheart was expecting kits...." he trailed off with a nervous glance at Dovewing, leaning against Tigreheart, for support.

Alarm slammed into Dovewing, harder than the waves of the river. Expecting kits? She couldn't be expecting kits! She had a quest to fullfill! How could she travel now, with her unborn burden? Suddenly, she winced and recoiled with guilt. "No, kits." she

murmured. "I do want you, it's just going to be a little difficult. Especialy if you're born..." she trailed off, her heart skipped a beat. What if they were born on the journey? She shivered, would they make it?

She curled herself protectively around her belly, with a new fearcness. "I promise i'll protect you."she whispered. "I'll love you with all my heart, just wait and see." Tigreheart's eyes shone with concern, "should I catch another mouse?" he offered. Dovewing couldn't reply, with a shudder as the kits squirmed and wriggled inside her. A wave of affection crossed her mind. They would be brave and strong warriors some day.

Tigrheart returned with a vole that was almost gone as soon as he set it down. Cinderheart's eyes widdened. " wow! How can you store such an appitite?" she exclaimed. Dovewing licked her chops guiltily. She had *no* idea!

Troutclaw took the lead this time. The smoky-gray tom cast a worried glance back at her. "We'll take it slow." he promised gently. Dovewing could only nodd. Dovewing saw Tigreheart whisper orders to Applefur and Berryheart. The two Shadowclan cats nodded. The next thing she knew, they were on either side of her, supporting Dovewing with their broad shoulders. Dovewing was too tired to complain, and she found that she needed the extra support.

Finely, they came to a stop at the edge of a sandy slope that met with a river below. Dovewing gulped. *One more step, and I would have plummeted down, with my unborn kits, and the river would...* she shook her head and tried not to think about it. Flattening her ears against the constant roar of the river, Dovewing crept forward nervously. Applefur's eyes widdened, as he steared Dovewing around a bend, in the cliff like land form. Finely, they came to a forest. Consentrating hard on how she was going to tell Tigreheart, Dovewing crashed into Mintfur's tail. "Sorry."Dovewing mumbled, through a wall of fur and pulled back. "Carefull!" Mintfur warned softly, clearly the she-cat had guessed the truth. Why had they stopped? She stretched her neck upward to see, ignoring the claws of pain in her somache. Troutclaw stiffened. He let Lionblaze take the lead, but they didn't move. What was going on? Lionblaze stiffened as well, tail twitching nervously. Dovewing's hackels lifted

nervously. What could they be frightened of? Dovewing curled herself protectively, so her belly was concealed by her gray plume of a tail.

Cinderheart spoke first. "I smell scent markers." she murmured. Lionblaze nodded. "We're on enemy territory." his gaze clouded with confusion. Only Dovewing heard what he said under his breath."I don't remember rouges marking, before..." he conscidered. Dovewing watched him, puzzled. Who cared if rouges had the new style! Her kits were in trouble!

Hollytuft stepped forward nervously. "What do we do now?" She asked shakily. Beepaw,a Shadowclan apprentice added uncertainly. "Do we chase them out?" Hollytuft shook her head nervously. "No, we can't, this is their territory, they have the power of knowledge over us, will they attack or injure us?" She added, black fur prickling. "Rouges and kittypets haven't been exsactly *friendly* to us recently." she shivered. " will we get shredded, or chased back home?" her whiskers quivered nervously.

Owlpaw stepped forward. "Of course not.." Owlpaw began. Dovewing bristled, ready to defend her clanmate. "I'll protect you." he promised. Dovewing froze. Was he *kidding*?

Hollytuft ducked her head. "I don't need protecting!" she spat, loud enough for the others to hear. Dovewing's whiskers twitched with amusement. But, when the others were out of ear-shot, she meowed. "But I would be honered." she murmured, blinking her green eyes warm, she stood for a moment. Dovewing stared in shock. Exactly how close would these two become? In Dovewing's opinion, she couldn't figure out what was so *Charming* about the anoying fur*ball!* Shaking her head she turned her attention back to the trail. She would never understand their connections, just like they would never understand hers with Tigreheart.

She froze, as a voice sounded ahead. "Stop right there!" Dovewing shuddered. The cat held athority in his voice. Would they be spared...

Chapter 4

Chapter 4

Dovewing jerked her head up, scanning the forest for the source of the sound.

The voice came again, closer. "Who goes there?" it was more of a command then a question.

Dovewing cowered behind a bush, praying the sunshine would hide her pale fur.

Shivering, Dovewing peered through the leaves and gasped with pain.

Dovewing's eyes widened as two white paws thumped the ground, dark brown legs sprouting from the feet. The leaves blocked her view, but she dared to peek out a bit. She stared at the stranger. He was dark brown tabby, with darker marked face, and a striped tail that was white and tufted at the tip, like his ears. His mighty amber eyes seemed to stare right through her, and muscles rippled under his soft pelt, and his white chest curled up like a main. The cat quickley licked it down, and it lay flat again. The cat dipped his head. Dovewing bristled in surprise. *Isn't that a clan's costume gesture?* Dipping heads was a sign of respect or aknowledgment that each clan shared. It surprised her to think that rouges did the same. The cat looked powerful, his claws were sheathed, but one sudden move and, Dovewing knew, they would be out to claw the enemy's pelt. Dovewing gulped. *I hope i don't have to fight him!* Owlpaw looked nervous too, Hollytuft pressed against his side, for comfort. Suddenly, to make things worse, a chestnut cat burst through the bushes beside the mighty cat, along with a dark gray and a black and ginger striped tom. A smaller pale ginger she-cat followed, opposite side of their leader, along with a smaller white tom. The white tom looked like an apprentice! Their pelts were bristling, beside their leader's sleek unruffled one. Dovewing's eyes narrowed.

Why was he so calm? What was he playing at?

Dovewing's eyes widened with dismay. There was no way they could beat them, if they had to fight their way out...Dovewing's thoughts trailed off. The red she-cat shifted her paws nervously, the white tom spoke in a young voice. "Let's chase them off!" he hissed, kneading the ground with anticipation. The the red she-cat glanced at Dovewing and gave a small nod with a blink. She wanted Dovewing to come out! Hesitantly, Dovewing crept forward, struggling with every step as her kits tumbled inside her, making her wince. She gritted her teeth, as she tumbled out of the bush. Dovewing panted and flopped onto her side, too egshausted to care that she had exposed herself to these strangers. The red cat's eyes widened and she whispered somthing in the leader's ear with a glance at Dovewing's swollen belly. The leader's eyes widened. The cln cats watched the leader warily, as the leader of the strangers Dipped his head and spoke. "Now Cloudpaw..." Cloudpaw? That was a clan name! Well maybe it was just his name, maybe he had fluffier paws or something... Dovewing was right, each white paw was lined with fur that curled up his paws like mittens, obscouring his claws. The cat continued. "No, we will let them explain their selves first..." Cloudpaw snorted, but the leader didn't react.. "And they are in no state for a fight." he glanced pointedly at Dovewing's stomache. She flinched.

"My name is Mountainshriek, this is Cherrytail." the red female dipped her head. "Bouncefire." the gray-black tom with ginger stripes nodded. Dovewing liked that name, it was creative...

Tinycloud..." the small, pale-ginger she-cat shifted, with a shy glance. "And Plumwillow..." the black and gray-mottled tom bowed politly. Mt shriek continued. "What brings you to our territory? We have somthing important to do, so make it quick, and if you search for shelter..." his eyes softened as they rested on Dovewing. " Skyclan will gladly help." at once, their jaws dropped. *Skyclan!* The fith clan. She had heared about the proud clan that had been driven out by twolegs, Firestar had quested and restored the lost clan, that lived in a sandy gorge. And now she was seeing them in real life! She wiggled with excitment. A moment of silence setteled down on them. Lionblaze found his voice and cleared his throat.

"G...g...g..g..greeting..g..s" waves of disbelief radiating off his golden pelt, bristleing in shock. "We are of no threat to you." he gulped and glanced around. "I am lionblaze of Thunderclan, this is mate Cinderheart, my duaghter Hollytuft and my former apprentice, Dovewing." the others didn't want to introduce themselves,so Lionblaze added. "These are Shadowclan, Windclan and Riverclan..." Mt.shriek inturupted. "Is this all of you?" he sounded genuinly curious, rather than hostile. "I thought that there would be more than you, Firestar told us there were lots of clan cats..." Lionblaze shook his head. "No, there are more of us, "he explained. "But we were chosen by Starclan to restore the lost clans..." as soon as the words left his mouth, The Skyclan cats stared with astonishment. "That's the same with us!" he exclaimed. Lionblaze gasped. "You must be the fith clan!" he realized. Mt.shriek whisked his tail and turned away. " follow us, we will give you shelter for the night." Lionblaze realaxed." is it far?" mt. shriek's whiskers twitched. "No." hint of amusment. "Actualy," he admitted." we had just barely begun to travel!" a mrrrow of amusment. Lionblaze shrugged."okay." he looked back."does any cat object?" he demanded. When no cat answered, he turned and the clans followed them back through the forest, deeper into the lush undergrowth. Whitetail's pelt prickled, not used to the closeness of trees. Dovewign loved the taste of fresh vegitation scents that bathed her tongue. It felt like home again. A pang of homesickness swept over her, but Dovewing shook it away, a knoght of grief forming in her belly.

They broke into a large hollowed out cliff."like the gorge..." whitetail murmured. Caves dotted the edges, reminding Dovewing again of her old Thunderclan home. The sandy hollow camp was similar to Skyclan's gorge. Dovewing could see that her Thunderclan clanmates felt the same, eyes shinning with recognition. Dovewing padded forward, tingling with excitment. She was going to meet the legendary Skyclan! And spend a day with the tree- jumping cat clan!

Nearbye, a small river weaved it's way in the reeds. The riverclan cats' eyes shone, when they caught sight of it. Windclan glanced nervously, as they entered the camp's clearing, clearly unnerved at being closed in by walls.

Owlpaw pelted to the stream and twitched his tail excidedly. Owlpaw waded in. Dovewing stared, was he crazy? "Come on!' he shouted at his Riverclan clanmates. "It's refreshing!" Hollytuft came over and sniffed the stream uncertainly. Dovewing realized he wasn't calling to his clanmates, but to Hollytuft. Dovewing shifted her paws nervously, he was choosing a cat over his own clanmates! *But we're* all *clanmates now.* She reminded herself, but she wasn't convinced.Cinderheart joined them. Dovewing remembered that Jayfeather had healed Cinderheart's leg injury by swimming every day to strengthen it.

She and Hollytuft splashed around and kicked agianst the current. Watching Hollytuft, Dovewings eyes widened in surprise. She looked just like a Riverclan cat!

A soft furred she-cat padded up to her, looking friendly. Dovewing studdied her carefully. The new cat was a fluffy, silky-furred she-cat with a gray, cream mottled coat that puffed out like cobwebs. Though elegant, the cat padded forward with a kind of athourity that made her stand out from the rest. Swinging her head gracefully, she trotted softly, paws barely scuffing the sand. Her huge plume of a tail was held high with importance, green eyes flashing with welcome. The cat dipped her head, pale fur waving in the wind. Against the sand, she stood out like a Starclan warrior in the dark! Dovewing tilted her head. For a moment, Dovewing wondered how she could hunt with a pelt like that. Then she realized that she had only seen that kind of a pelt in Cloudtail and Daizy, and Minty the kittypet who had stayed with Thunderclan during the flood. Minty had gone back to her twolegs, but Frankie had stayed, now named Stormcloud. Firestar had been a young kittypet named Rusty, when he had first stumbled apon the clans, and met Graystripe,his best friend, Blustar had been given a prophecy:"Fire alone will save our clan." Bluestar had taken *'Rusty's*' flame-colored pelt as a sign that Firestar was the fire... Her gaze darkened with grief, as memories washed over her.Firestar had saved the clans more times then she could count: The time when Windclan was driven out by Brokenstar (Firestar and Graystripe brought them back), When Riverclan had flooded and had been forced out of camp...(Firestar and Graystripe brought them prey from Thunderclan territory and brought the proud clan from

starvation), When Tigrstar plotted to killl Bluestar...(Firestar uncovered his plot and blustar banished him Tigrestar), Bloodclan, The great Journey, And the dark forest attacked.Firestar had died, after killing his long timed nemisis, Tigrestar, for good. All the clans mocked Thunderclan for taking in the "strays", *But the truth is, that none of them would be standing here today.* And Firestar and Sandstorm,his mate, had restored Skyclan too! *If Firestar hadn't brought Cloudtail into the clans, I wouldn't be born!* She realized with a shudder. *And niether would my kits!* She puffed her chest, proud to be kin of such a powerfull leader. Firestar's kittypet sister, Princess, had given Fire'heart' her first born son, Cloudtail. Cloudtail had mated with Brightheart and had Dovewing's mother, Whitewing! Whitewing and Birchfall had Dovewing and her sister, Ivypool. If Firestar hadn't started taking kittypets in, all those many moons ago, Dovewing might not have exsisted! If she had been born at all, Birchfall and Whtewing wouldn't been her parants. She might have been a diiferant cat!

Dovewing turned her thoughts back to the stranger cat who had just approached. Dovewing sniffed. The cat had unquike features that she couldn't name, and the familiar, welcoming scent of herbs clung to her fluffy pelt. Realization hit her. Dovewing's blue eyes widened This must be Echosong! Firestar had chosen her as the Skyclan's first medicine cat! And she was meeting her! Dovewing gasped. *I wish Ivypool was here.* Her sister had stayed behind in Thunderclan, and Dovewing missed her more than she could bare...Dovewing shook away the sharp pang of homelessness stabbing her heart, sharper then thorns, threatening to overwhelm her. Dovewing shuddered, swallowing the knought in her stomache, twisted with grief.

Dovewing stared at Echosong, still stunned, she finely managed to speak.

"Echosong!" Echosong dipped her head."I see you know who I am." she meowed calmly, then glanced at Dovewing's belly. "When are you expecting?" she quirried. Tigreheart's eyes widened. "Expecting?" he echoed. "Dovewing, that's great!" he purred. Dovewing forced a purr too, though she couldn't share his enthusiasm. *What if carrying kits prevents me from traveling*?

Dovewing shuddered at the thought that she would have to stay here and rest when her clanmates could be risking their lives on a very important journey... Dovewing winced, shutting her eyes. Opening them again, she saw Tigreheart's amber eyes staring at her, wide and tro

ubled. Echosong, however, was as calm as ever, resting her tail on Dovewing's shoulder, gently.

Echosong read her thoughts. "You can travel, it's still early." Dovewing breathed a

sigh of relief. She could travel after all!
"But." Echosong cautioned. "You better take it easy, your not invincible after all. Go rest for the day." she nudged her towards the nursery. Dovewing sighed, letting herself be brought to the mossy den. Two amber eyes shone in the dark. A brown speckled queen lay in the shadows." My name's sparrowpelt."she nodded at Dovewing." First litter?" Dovewing nodded. Sparrowpelt purred. "Me too, mine were born just this moon."

Dovewing blinked, unsure of what to do. She just simply meowed. "M-my name's D-Dovewing." Sparrowpelt nodded and beckoned with her speckled tail."come on Dovewing,"she invited warmly."come see them." Dovewing made her way over to her, relieved to know what to do at last. Dovewing's eyes narrowed in the darkness, then, her vision gradually became clearer, as her eyes adjusted to the dim light. Dovewing couldn't hold back a purr at the sight of the tiny, fuzzy bodies that squirmed, mewling for food. Heart warmed at the sight of new life, Dovewing straightened with pride. That would be her someday, and hers would be the first kits in her new clan! Sparrowpelt pointed to a small, mottled kit with a tan pelt the color of sandstorm's."This is Blazekit."Then a cream mottled she-kit."Dawnkit..." and a brown she-kit with ginger splotches."cherrykit." Dovewing nodded, mesmerized. She gazed at the three kits, as they wiggled and squealed, batting at each other to steal some milk. Without control, a pur rumbled in her throat. Sparrowpelt blinked at her and motioned to Dovewing's swollen belly. "So," Sparrowpelt mewed in a friendly tone. "How many?" Dovewing narrowed her blue eyes, trying to remember if Echosong had said anything, or if she had picked up any gosip useful to the

question Sparrowpelt had asked.

Dovewing finely just shook her head. "I actually had no idea i was expecting until now." she admitted, feeling rather silly at her own ignorance. Expecting judgment, Dovewing eyed sparrowpelt warrily. She was surprised to see sympathy in the Skyclan queen's deep amber eyes. "Oh I see." she nodded kindly. "Does the father know?" she tilted her head. Dovewing ducked her head in embarrassment. She was not used to Tigerheart being referred to as her mate since her forbidden love had been kept secret for all this time. It was weird that everyone would know now. Choking down her feelings she replied. "Y-yes. He was very surprised and delighted all at once. But to be honest he was still very protective of me before he knew." she purred. Sparrowpelt curled her tail in amusement. "I don't doubt that! Sometimes when dealing with their mate, toms act like a mother watching over a kit!" she exclaimed in a lighthearted purr. Dovewing blinked, purring with laughter. "Definitely!" she agreed, beginning to relax. Sparrowpelt nodded, lowering herself to the sandy den floor, curling her body around her tiny kits. She blinked in welcome, inviting Dovewing to join her. Dovewing blinked gratefully, curling up next to her. Dovewing surprisingly felt very at ease here in the strange clan that understood her struggles completely. But she reminded herself not to get too attached, for they wouldn't be staying long. Dovewing let out an exhausted sigh. Sparrowpelt looked at her sympathetically. "Get some rest Dovewing, you have a long day ahead of you." she soothed. Dovewing was too tired to object, Closing her eyes and resting her head on her paws. The tiny purrs of the kits nearby droned her to sleep as a comforting darkness washed over her.

Ideas

I want to write more but dont know how to continue. Comment ideas on what i should do in the story next.